



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

4-H National  
Headquarters



# 4-H Healthy Living: Social-Emotional

## Mission of 4-H:

A world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.

### The Challenge:

There is a direct correlation between physical health and mental-emotional-behavioral health. A growing number of children ages 4-17 are reported by parents to have serious difficulties with emotions, concentration, behavior, and getting along with other people. A significant amount of preteens and teens suffer from health issues such as depression, negative/unhealthy relationships with people, and other problems.

### The Solution:

Through 4-H Healthy Living strategies and programming, youth will...

- Be more aware of their emotions, behaviors, personal qualities, the external supports that influence choice and success, and the feelings and perspectives of others.
- Increase their awareness of different kinds of stressors and skills for coping with stress.
- Improve their ability to identify, manage, and appropriately express their emotions and behaviors.
- Improve their ability to make positive decisions and relationships and to access external supports.

### The Partnerships:

The following are examples of how partnerships contribute to the work of 4-H Healthy Living goals.

- **Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Group:** This committee is an interagency group led by the U.S. Department of Education that works to coordinate policy, research, and communications on bullying topics. As a member of the Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Steering Committee, 4-H provides positive youth development expertise and assists with communication efforts.
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** This agency, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation.

### The Results:

- 4-H is part of “[Talk, Text, Act,](#)” nationwide conversation on mental health and how to help a friend in need. Through text messaging, small groups receive discussion questions to lead them through a conversation about mental health. California 4-H was recognized in 2015 as having the most participants among youth organizations.
- Michigan State University 4-H developed the [Be SAFE](#) curriculum. Be SAFE: Safe, Affirming, and Fair Environments helps young people aged 11 to 14 and adults work in partnership to create environments that are physically and emotionally safe. Its engaging activities promote social and emotional learning and development, address and prevent bullying, and foster positive relationships with peers and adults.
- National 4-H Conference delegates have presented strategies for addressing bullying to the U.S. Department of [Health and Human Services](#) and to the U.S. Department of [Education](#).

The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth outreach program from the land-grant institutions’ Cooperative Extension Services, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 4-H serves as a model program for the practice of positive youth development. 4-H National Headquarters is housed within the Division of Youth and 4-H at USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Additional support for 4-H programming is provided through National 4-H Council. For more information email [4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov).